



"Here is the Patience of the Saints: Here are they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus." Rev. 14: 12.

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The Shut Door and the Close of Probation

The Position of the Spirit of Prophecy Between 1844 and 1851, as Revealed in Original Sources of Our Early Documents and Periodicals

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FROM time to time there is brought to the attention of Seventh-day Adventists a subject concerning which there is more or less perplexity, designated by the terms "the shut door" and "the close of probation in 1844." The persons who feel constrained to call attention to this subject in its various phases, seem to think that there are difficulties which should be removed—mistakes and wrongs which should be explained and made right; and the claim is made that the reliability of the utterances of the spirit of prophecy is involved in this matter. One writer makes the following statement:

"*The Shut Door, or Probation for Sinners Ended Oct. 22, 1844.*" The above title indicated the theory held and dogmatically taught by all Seventh-day Adventists until the autumn of 1851. . . . Mrs. White had revelation after revelation in her visions during this same time confirming this theory."

For the benefit of those who may not understand just what is involved in such assertions, and may not be in possession of the actual facts in the matter, the following brief review of the subject has been prepared, and is devoted primarily to an examination of the writings of Mrs. E. G. White during the period referred to,—from 1844 to 1851.

As to the general question, the following statements express the truth:

1. The people who were clearly and fully identified with what was known as the "second advent movement" just prior to the autumn of 1844, believed very sincerely that the Saviour would return to this world in 1844.

2. They believed also that at His coming the ministry of Christ for sinners would cease, and that thereafter there would be no salvation for sinners.

3. This, they believed, would mark the time for "shutting the door" of the sanctuary, thus closing the work of salvation which had so long been offered to sinners by our great High Priest.

4. The year 1844 passed, but the Saviour did not come as they had looked for Him. This was a fearful disappointment to the sincere believers. They could not understand why He did not come. They were thrown into great perplexity and confusion. Had probation closed, and was the destiny of the human race fixed?

5. Many still held the conviction that although Christ had not come to earth, He had left the sanctuary; that the door was shut, and that there was no longer opportunity for sinners to be saved. William Miller said:

"We have done our work in warning sinners, and in trying to awake a formal church. God in his providence has shut the door; we can only stir one another up to be patient, and be diligent to make our calling and election sure."—*The Advent Herald*, Dec. 11, 1844.

6. In this state of disappointment, perplexity, and confusion, some turned away, rejecting the whole experience as a great human mistake and deception. Others held on by faith, and through earnest study and prayer endeavored to find an explanation of it all. These latter abandoned such errors in their views as were revealed to them from time to time.

7. Those who later became Seventh-day Adventists were among the latter class. Their change from the position which they held at the time of the disappointment in 1844, was cautious and slow. In the very nature of the case, as the time came, and for a short period thereafter, they believed that their work for sinners was at an end. Later, as they studied, they received the light on the question of the sanctuary, and saw in the words of the Scripture that they "must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

8. But while, after the passing of the time in 1844, they continued for a period to believe that salvation for sinners was past and that Christ would quickly appear, there was no statement from Mrs. E. G. White to the effect that it had been revealed to her that probation for the world had closed, and that there was no longer salvation for the unsaved.

There is a vast difference between holding a personal belief regarding a question, and declaring that this belief has been obtained by a direct revelation from the Lord. To illustrate: The apostle Peter and his associates believed that the gospel message they were to proclaim was to be confined to the Jewish nation, and that the Gentile world was not included in the purpose of God nor in His commission to them. They not only believed this, but clung to it tenaciously. None of them, however, declared that this had been revealed to them in a vision or revelation from God. But in time the apostle Peter was given a vision by the Lord on the subject, and the instruction he received through that vision squarely contradicted the personal view he had held and taught. This, with additional revelations, finally led him, and all the disciples, to abandon their first views and adopt a correct theory. But they were so cautious and slow in making changes that it took years to get into the full light. All this we learn from the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.

Statements of Mrs. White Concerning Her Belief and Teaching

The one sure and satisfactory way of arriving at the truth of the question under consideration is by a careful examination of the published utterances of Mrs. White during that period. For many years the officers of the General Conference have made earnest efforts to secure a copy of every document that was printed by our pioneers in the early years of our cause. They have called for these through the columns of our papers, and have carried on correspondence with elderly people who have been identified with us for the longest period of time. They have also corresponded with descendants and acquaintances of the oldest believers who have passed away.

This endeavor has resulted in a collection of all the printed documents containing the writings of Mrs. E. G. White, in their original form, that were issued from 1844 to the autumn of 1851, with one exception. It is therefore possible to give every one of Mrs. White's statements regarding the shut door and the close of probation in 1844 in the order in which they occur, and, with one exception (which will be explained later), as they appear in the publications in which they were first printed.

It is possible to do more than this. A full list of all her articles and letters which are to be found in any of our publications up to the close of 1851, is produced in this review. These documents are the original sources of the history of our cause during those years. It is from the statements which Mrs. White herself made in those early publications that we learn what she believed and taught at that time.

Document No. 1

The first printed document issued by the pioneers of our cause which contained any statements written by Mrs. E. G. White, was printed in Portland, Maine, in the spring of 1846. This document is not available; and it is the only publication containing statements by Mrs. White, printed between 1844 and 1852, of which we do not have an original copy in our vault. Concerning the statements from Mrs. White which appeared in that document, we have the following word of explanation from one of the pioneers, who assisted in the publication of the document:

"The vision, 'To the Remnant,' was given soon after the disappointment in 1844. A small edition of about 250 copies was printed in Portland, Maine, on a foolscap sheet, and circulated among the few believers and honest ones. The last page of the sheet was left partly blank, so that those receiving this document could have a place to write out their opinion of the same, whether favorable or unfavorable, and return to the publisher, if they wished. Elder James White was the publisher, and Brother H. S. Gurney [the writer], now of Memphis, Mich.,* stood half of the expense of printing. [The total cost was \$15.] This was the first form in which any of the views of Mrs. E. G. White were published. This was in the spring of 1846. [Signed] H. S. GURNEY."

We have never seen a copy of that foolscap sheet, and do not know whether there is a copy in existence today. However, that same message, addressed "To the Remnant," was reprinted in a tract of twenty-four pages, entitled, "A Word to the 'Little Flock.'" This tract was published by James White, at Brunswick, Maine, May 30, 1847, about one year after the printing of the foolscap sheet referred to. Four years later the message was again reprinted, in a pamphlet, the title page of which reads as follows:

"A SKETCH
OF THE
CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE
AND
VIEWS
of
ELLEN G. WHITE

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N. Y.
PUBLISHED BY JAMES WHITE
1851"

The tract and the pamphlet are both at hand, and we find in this first message from Mrs. White no reference to the shut door question. It does, however, contain a statement that has caused more or less perplexity and discussion. Here is the statement:

"It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the City, as all the wicked world which God had rejected."

This statement is all there is in the entire message that can be interpreted to mean that there was no longer salvation for sinners; and this is used by some as evidence that Mrs. White claimed to have been shown in vision that the whole world of sinners had at that time been rejected by the Lord, and that there was no salvation for any one who was not already within the fold.

But such an interpretation is not necessary. The truth is, that such interpretation is not in harmony with the general tenor of the message, as we shall see by a careful examination of all it contains.

It may be well to call attention to the time when this message came, and to the conditions under which it came.

The message was given to Miss Ellen G. Harmon in her first vision, December, 1844, before her marriage to James White. This was not more than two months after the great disappointment of Oct. 22, 1844, and at a time when those who had been in the advent movement prior to 1844 were in the midst of great sorrow, uncertainty, and confusion. They had expected that the Saviour would come on the 22d day of October to translate them from this dark world of sin. He did not come! Why not? Was He on the way? What were they to do? Was the whole movement a huge blunder? Was there nothing genuine in it? Should they all reject the whole affair, and in humiliation turn back to their old associations in the world?

Such was the uncertain, perplexing situation. They knew not what to do. No clear, well-defined decisions had been made, no conclusions reached. Then came this positive message, addressed "To the Remnant;" and later the title was enlarged to read, "To the Remnant Scattered Abroad."

The message is too lengthy to reproduce here in its entirety, but I quote the vital statements. The opening sentence reads as follows:

"As God has shown me in holy vision the travels of the Advent people to the Holy City, and the rich reward to be given those who wait the return of their Lord from the wedding, it may be my duty to give you a short sketch of what God has revealed to me."

Then follows a description of the journey:

"The dear saints have got many trials to pass through. . . ."

"While praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell on me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them—when a voice said to me, 'Look again, and look a little higher.'

* This statement was written in 1891. The writer is now deceased.

"At this I raised my eyes and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world.

"On this path the Advent people were traveling to the City, which was at the farther end of the path.

"They had a bright light set up behind them at the first end of the path, which an angel told me was the Midnight Cry.

"This light shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet so they might not stumble.

"And if they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the City, they were safe.

"But soon some grew weary, and they said the City was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before.

"Then Jesus would encourage them by raising his glorious right arm, and from his arm came a glorious light which waved over the Advent band, and they shouted Hallelujah!

"Others rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God that had led them out so far.

"The light behind them went out leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and got their eyes off the mark and lost sight of Jesus, and fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below.

"It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the City, as all the wicked world which God had rejected.

"They fell all the way along the path one after another, until we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming.

"The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake.

"When God spake the time, he poured on us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai.

"By this time the 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united.

"On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious Star containing Jesus' new name."—*Mrs. E. G. White, in "A Word to the 'Little Flock,'" Brunswick, Maine, May 30, 1847. James White, Publisher.*

Let us note the main points in this outline:

1. The path to the Holy City was straight and narrow, and high above the world. This undoubtedly represents the high standard of Christian experience and life the remnant church is to maintain to the end of the journey.

2. A bright light was set up at the beginning of the path, which shone all along the way, so that they might not stumble.

3. That light was God's truth and message which was leading them to the city. Those who kept pace with this light were safe.

4. In making the journey, the believers had many trials to pass through.

5. After entering upon the journey, the end of the path, where the holy city stood, seemed a long way off to some who had expected to reach the city soon. These grew weary of the trials and the waiting.

6. But Jesus gave them fresh light and courage, and they shouted, "Hallelujah!" and pressed on.

7. When the company reached the end of the journey, there were 144,000 of them, all sealed and perfectly united, ready for the Saviour to translate them.

Here we pause to inquire, Where did this great company of living saints—144,000 in number—come from? The view of this journey was given about two months after the disappointment of 1844. There was no such company "all sealed and perfectly united" at that time. In fact, the sealing message which was to develop the 144,000 was not then understood. *It is plainly evident that this view revealed a great evangelical movement in operation throughout the world until the coming of the Lord.* It surely involves the gathering of a great company of people who were nowhere in sight when the view was given. It certainly does not indicate that the gospel work had been finished, and that probation for sinners had closed.

8. But while making the journey, some "rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God who had led them out so far." This was a very serious conclusion to reach. It was Jesus, their Saviour, who was leading them. In that denial of divine leadership, they were rejecting Christ, the light of the world. As there is no other name, no other means, whereby it is possible to be saved, those who turned away from Him cut themselves off from all light, help, and hope.

9. All the way along the journey, some "fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below." In rejecting Christ as leader, they turned back to the leadership of the prince of darkness and despair, and united with those in this "dark and wicked world" who were "without Christ, . . . having no hope, and without God in the world." Eph. 2:12.

10. "It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the City, as all the wicked world which God had rejected." The people who rejected the divine Leader, Christ, had been highly honored by the Lord. They had been lifted to high table-lands of Christian experience and fellowship with Christ; but they turned from their Leader, and "rashly denied" that the light and experience and fellowship that had come to them was from God.

When Israel at Kadesh-barnea, on the very border of Canaan, rashly denied that it was God who had led them all that wonderful way, by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, and turned to go back to Egypt, that dark and wicked land, they sealed their doom. By rashly denying God's leadership, they cut themselves off from the great privilege of ever entering the Land of Promise. Deut. 1:19-31.

In the epistle to the Hebrews we are told what a terrible thing it is for those who have once been signally blessed of God in rich spiritual experiences to turn away from Him. "It is impossible," the epistle declares, "for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." Heb. 6:4-6.

It is not difficult for any experienced student of the Bible to understand that there have always been individuals, cities, and nations in this world in revolt and rebellion against God, which have been rejected by Him. How can we on any other basis explain God's dealings with individuals and with nations through the whole history of the world? "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:38), is the fiat that has gone forth from God to more than one nation or class of people.

When the great advent movement was being carried forward by sincere, consecrated men and women, under the leadership of Christ Himself, it was opposed, derided, and hindered with a bitter, satanic hatred by a large class of people who could and should have known better. When ridicule and jeering failed, there was resort to mob violence. How far such separated themselves from God, He alone knows. To what extent God rejected that part of the wicked world, who can say? And the impossibility of such ever even desiring to get on that straight, narrow, and high path, cast up for the despised people of God, is quite evident; and the

impossibility of those who "rashly denied" Christ as their leader, left the path, and turned back to the scoffing world, ever even desiring to get back onto that straight and narrow path, so high above the world, is not difficult to understand.

Now it is this particular statement which troubles and perplexes some. They take it to mean at that time,—when this view was given, December, 1844,—the whole wicked world had been rejected, and that there was no possible salvation for them. But such an interpretation gives a meaning which conflicts with the message of which it forms a part. Not another sentence in the entire message implies, even remotely, what some interpret this sentence to mean.

Is it exactly fair to take a single, brief sentence from its context, and place a meaning upon it which makes it conflict with the document as a whole? Is it not more reasonable and consistent to conclude that the wording of the sentence is not clear—that it does not express fully, and without possibility of misunderstanding, just what the writer had in mind? We can understand how this state of things might have been expressed more clearly; but the obscurity of the phrase need not destroy our faith in the messenger. The writer sincerely believes that the statement as it reads,—*"It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the City, as all the wicked world which God had rejected,"*—does not, taken apart from the context, express the view of the author as clearly as was intended. This opinion is strengthened by the action of Mrs. White when, in revising the printed message, she eliminated this sentence.

As has been previously stated, the publication in 1847 of the message as we now have it, was in a tract bearing the title, "A Word to the 'Little Flock.'" Its next appearance in print was in 1851, when it was included in a pamphlet entitled, "A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White." On page 9 of this pamphlet, Mrs. White refers to the republication of this message as follows:

"Here I will give the view that was first published in 1846. In this view I saw only a very few of the events of the future. More recent views have been more full. I shall therefore leave out a portion and prevent repetition." (Italics ours.)

Immediately following this statement is the message entitled, "To the Remnant Scattered Abroad."

In comparing this reprint, as it appears in this pamphlet, "Experience and Views," with the same message as it appeared in the former publication—the tract entitled, "A Word to the 'Little Flock,'"—we find that the author thought best to make quite a number of changes and omissions. For example:

There is an omission from page 10 of two sentences involving thirty-nine words. There is also an omission from page 16 of twenty-three printed lines. In other places, single words, or brief sentences of two or three words are omitted. Then again, there are various substitutions of words for those in the original, as, for instance, the word "better" is substituted for "upper" in referring to the heavenly abode; the word "glittering" is used instead of "golden" in referring to crowns, etc. In all, there are eleven omissions and ten slight changes in the printed message of 1851 as compared with the printed document of 1847.

The elimination which is of particular interest in this connection, is the first referred to, a portion of which is as follows: "It was just as impossible for

them to get on the path again and go to the City, as all the wicked world which God had rejected."

Thus it will be seen that the sentence which seems so perplexing to some was eliminated by the author herself. She evidently saw that it could be misinterpreted to conflict with the rest of the message, and eliminated it.

Document No. 2

The second printed document, or letter, from the pen of Mrs. White, dated April 7, 1847, was given to the public in "A Word to the 'Little Flock,'" p. 18. This is a letter addressed to "Dear Brother Bates." In this letter there is not the slightest reference to the shut door or the close of probation.

Document No. 3

The third message, or letter, from Mrs. White was printed in "A Word to the 'Little Flock.'" This was written at Topsham, Maine, April 21, 1847, and was addressed to Eli Curtis. This message refers to the "shut door" as follows:

"The Lord has shown me in vision, that Jesus rose up, and shut the door, and entered the Holy of Holies, at the 7th month 1844; but Michael's standing up (Dan. 12:1) to deliver his people, is in the future. . . ."

"I believe the Sanctuary, to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days, is the New Jerusalem Temple, of which Christ is a minister. The Lord showed me in vision, more than one year ago, that Brother Crosier had the true light, on the cleansing of the Sanctuary, &c; and that it was his will, that Brother C. should write out the view which he gave us in the Day-Star, Extra, February 7, 1846. I feel fully authorized by the Lord, to recommend that Extra, to every saint."—"A Word to the 'Little Flock,'" p. 12.

There is no hint in this that the shutting of the door of the first apartment meant the closing of probation for sinners.

Document No. 4

The fourth view was given in 1847 while Mrs. White was at Topsham, Maine, and is recorded in "Experience and Views," pp. 15-19. Presenting a detailed description of the heavenly temple, the two apartments, the ark, the tables of stone, and the fourth commandment shining with outstanding brilliance, Mrs. White said:

"I saw that God had children who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They had not rejected the light on it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully. This enraged the churches, and nominal Adventists, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth. And at this time God's chosen all saw clearly that we had the truth, and they came out and endured the persecution with us."

This clearly states she "saw" many embracing the Sabbath truth and joining this people. These were from among those who had not rejected the light. The marked movement here referred to is at the "commencement of the time of trouble." On pages 3 and 4 of the "Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views," published in 1854, Sister White explains at length the precise meaning and time of the fulfilment, as follows:

"On page 17, is as follows: 'I saw that the Holy Sabbath is, and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers; and that the Sabbath is the great question, to unite the hearts of God's dear, waiting saints. I saw that God had children, who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They had not rejected the light on it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully.'

"This view was given in 1847, when there were but very few of the Advent brethren observing the Sabbath, and of these, but few supposed that its observance was of sufficient importance to draw a line between the people of God and unbelievers. Now, the fulfilment of that view is beginning to be seen."

"The commencement of the time of trouble,' here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out; but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the Sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, the nations will be angry, yet held in check, so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At the time the 'latter rain,' or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out."

Document No. 5

The next message was entitled, "God's Love for His People," and is found on page 21 of "Experience and Views." No reference whatever is here made to the shut door or anything relating thereto.

Document No. 6

On Dec. 16, 1848, a brief view was presented on the "Shaking of the Powers of Heaven." But it has no bearing on this question. It is recorded on pages 23 and 24 of "Experience and Views."

Document No. 7

The seventh document we have from Mrs. White is a message entitled, "To Those Who Are Receiving the Seal of the Living God," received Jan. 5, 1849. This was printed on one side of a sheet 10½ inches wide by 15½ inches long. It is dated at Topsham, Maine, Jan. 31, 1849, and signed "E. G. White." Not the remotest hint can be found in this message regarding the shut door or the close of probation in 1844. The greater portion of this document was reprinted in our first church paper, *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 22, 23, published at Middletown, Conn., August, 1849. Later this same matter was published in a pamphlet entitled, "A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White," printed at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., 1851, by James White.

Again it may be said that in this whole message no reference is made to the shut door and no-more-salvation-for-sinners question. On the other hand, it contains much that indicates that the gospel work was still going forward, and would continue to do so until our Lord closes His work in the most holy place just before He returns.

Document No. 8

The eighth printed statement from Mrs. White appears in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 21, 22, August, 1849. This is addressed, "Dear Brethren and Sisters," and was given to her March 24, 1849. It was later reprinted in "Experience and Views," pp. 24-27, 1851. In "Experience and Views" this article is entitled, "The Open and Shut Door." This is the first statement I have found from her in any printed document devoted entirely to the shut door question. I will quote from this article every line that refers to the shut door:

"Sabbath, March 24th, 1849, we had a sweet, and very interesting meeting with the Brethren at Topsham, Me. The Holy Ghost was poured out upon us, and I was taken off in the Spirit to the City of the living God. There I was shown that the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, relating to the shut door, could not be separated, and that the time for the commandments of God to shine out, with all their importance, and for God's people to be tried on the Sabbath truth, was when the door was opened in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary, where the Ark is, containing the ten commandments. This door was not opened, until the mediation of Jesus was finished in the Holy Place of the Sanctuary in 1844. Then, Jesus rose up, and shut the door in the Holy Place, and opened the door in the Most Holy, and passed within the second vail, where he now stands by the Ark; and where the faith of Israel now reaches.

"I saw that Jesus had shut the door in the Holy Place,

and no man can open it; and that he had opened the door in the Most Holy, and no man can shut it: (See Rev. iii: 7, 8;) and that since Jesus has opened the door in the Most Holy Place, which contains the Ark, the commandments have been shining out to God's people, and they are being tested on the Sabbath question.

"I saw that the present test on the Sabbath could not come, until the mediation of Jesus in the Holy Place was finished; and he had passed within the second vail; therefore, Christians, who fell asleep before the door was opened in the Most Holy, when the midnight cry was finished, at the seventh month 1844; and had not kept the true Sabbath, now rest in hope; for they had not the light, and the test on the Sabbath, which we now have, since that door was opened. I saw that Satan was tempting some of God's people on this point. Because so many good Christians have fallen asleep in the triumphs of faith, and have not kept the true Sabbath, they were doubting about it being a test for us now.

"I saw that the enemies of the present truth have been trying to open the door of the Holy Place, that Jesus has shut; and to close the door of the Most Holy Place, which he opened in 1844, where the Ark is containing the two tables of stone, on which are written the ten commandments, by the finger of Jehovah. . . .

"I saw that the mysterious signs and wonders, and false reformatations would increase, and spread. The reformatations that were shown me, were not reformatations from error to truth; but from bad to worse; for those who professed a change of heart, had only wrapt about them a religious garb, which covered up the iniquity of a wicked heart. Some appeared to have been really converted, so as to deceive God's people; but if their hearts could be seen, they would appear as black as ever.

"My accompanying angel bade me look for the travail of souls for sinners as used to be. I looked, but could not see it; for the time for their salvation is past."

Statements in the last two paragraphs are understood by some to teach that after 1844 it was impossible for any of the unconverted to be saved, because "the time of their salvation is past." Much criticism of these statements might have been spared had the objectors read and accepted the explanation Mrs. White gave of them in the "Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views," published at Rochester, N. Y., in 1854. She says:

"DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS:—As I have given a brief sketch of my experience and views, published in 1851, it seems to be my duty to notice some points in that little work; also, to give more recent views. . . .

"The view of the 'Open and Shut Door,' on pages 24-27, was given in 1849. The application of Rev. iii, 7, 8, to the Heavenly Sanctuary and Christ's ministry, was entirely new to me. I had never heard the idea advanced by any one. Now, as the subject of the Sanctuary is being clearly understood, the application is seen in its beauty and force.

"The 'false reformatations' referred to on page 27, are yet to be more fully seen. This view relates more particularly to those who have heard and rejected the light of the Advent doctrine. They are given over to strong delusions. Such will not have 'the travail of soul for sinners' as formerly. Having rejected the Advent, and being given over to the delusions of Satan, 'the time for their salvation is past.' This does not, however, relate to those who have not heard and have not rejected the doctrine of the Second Advent."—Pages 3, 4.

This explanation places these statements and the one in her first message, which has been examined at considerable length, very close together in meaning; namely, that they refer to a class who rejected God's message in such a flagrant manner as to place themselves beyond His reach. Esau so despised and rejected the birthright and patriarchal blessing that he lost it forever. Pharaoh, the haughty king of Egypt, rejected God's message and revelation of divine power with such insolence that he cut himself off from any further connection with God.

Document No. 9

The ninth published statement we find is a letter addressed to the "Dear Brethren and Sisters." It is printed in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 4, p. 31, September, 1849; and reprinted in "Experience and Views," p. 27, under the heading, "The Trial of Our Faith." Here is what is said, and all that is said in

this article, about the sanctuary, the shut door, and the close of probation:

"We have but a little space of time left to work for God. Nothing should be too dear to sacrifice, for the salvation of the scattered and torn flock of Jesus. . . .

"Jesus is still in his Holy Temple, and will now accept our sacrifices, our prayers, and our confessions of faults and sins, and will now pardon all the transgressions of Israel, that they may be blotted out before he leaves the Sanctuary. When Jesus leaves the Sanctuary, then he that is holy and righteous, will be holy and righteous still; for all their sins will then be blotted out, and they will be sealed with the seal of the living God. But those that are unjust and filthy, will be unjust and filthy still; for then there will be no Priest in the Sanctuary to offer their sacrifices, their confessions, and their prayers before the Father's throne. Therefore, what is done to rescue souls from the coming storm of wrath, must be done before Jesus leaves the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary."

Surely this statement does not indicate that Christ had closed His ministry for a lost world. But it does say that "what is done to rescue souls from the coming storm of wrath must be done before Jesus leaves the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary."

Document No. 10

The tenth document is a vision given to encourage Brother Ralph to labor for Brother Rhodes (*Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 5, p. 35). This was received about Nov. 19, 1849, and contained the following sentence:

"I saw that in Bro. Rhodes' mouth there had been no guile in speaking against the present truth, relating to the Sabbath, and Shut Door."

No definition is here given of what is embraced by the expression "shut door" as here used.

Document No. 11

The eleventh document is another letter in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 8, p. 64, March, 1850, addressed to "My Dear Brethren and Sisters." This letter has two paragraphs, and occupies four inches of space. In it occurs this statement:

"The excitements and false reformations of this day do not move us, for we know that the Master of the house rose up in 1844, and shut the door of the first apartment of the heavenly tabernacle; and now we certainly expect that they will 'go with their flocks,' 'to seek the Lord; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself (within the second veil) from them.' The Lord has shown me that the power which is with them is a mere human influence, and not the power of God."

The reformations here referred to are the false reformations quoted and explained in Document No. 8. They were conducted by unconverted men who had rejected light from God, and who had "wrapped about them a religious garb which covered their iniquity."

Document No. 12

The twelfth is a message addressed "To the 'Little Flock,'" printed in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 9, p. 71, April, 1850; reprinted in "Experience and Views," p. 29, 1851. In this message there is no reference to the sanctuary, the shut door, nor the close of probation.

Document No. 13

The thirteenth document is another letter addressed to the "Dear Brethren and Sisters." It is found in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 11, p. 86, November, 1850. A portion of this letter is reprinted in "Experience and Views," p. 33, under the heading, "The Last Plagues and the Judgment." This letter makes no reference to the shut door nor the close of probation.

Remaining Documents

In this closing section I shall place twelve very short messages given in the last twenty-one pages of "Experience and Views." There is no reference whatever made in these twelve short articles to the shut door nor to the close of probation in 1844.

This brings us down to August, 1851. As it is claimed that Mrs. White and her associates changed their position on the shut door and the no-salvation-for-sinners question after 1851, I do not think it is necessary for me to follow the matter further.

So far as I can learn from the documents in our possession, I have given correct citations to everything that came from the pen of Mrs. White from 1844 to the close of 1851, and I have given every line of her statements regarding the shut door, and the close of probation questions. Here is what we find:

1. That during that period of six years there were printed in various forms twenty-five separate messages, articles, and letters from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White.

2. That in only five articles or letters of this number is there any reference made to the shut door and the close of probation.

3. That in not one of the five references to the shut door does Mrs. White state that the door of the second apartment of the sanctuary in which Christ ministers as High Priest or Mediator for a lost world, was closed in 1844. Nor does she once state that there was no salvation for any sinners after 1844.

4. That in all that was printed from the pen of Mrs. White during eight years,—1844-1851,—we find three statements so worded that two different and conflicting interpretations can be placed upon them. But this is not to be counted as strange, for we find the same perplexity in certain passages of Scripture. The views here maintained make the statements harmonious with the general tenor of the messages of which they are parts, and with all the rest of her printed messages.

The writer believes that any one who will study this subject impartially, with only the desire to arrive at the truth, must come to the conclusion that while the early Adventists—i. e., those who were disappointed in 1844—believed for a time that probation closed on the tenth day of the seventh month of that year, there is no evidence to show that Mrs. E. G. White ever taught this error. The statements relied upon by some to show this, do not prove it. And it is certain that other things she wrote between 1844 and 1851 are entirely inconsistent with such a view.

It is further apparent that while for six or seven years after the 1844 disappointment the Seventh-day Adventist believers held that their work was for the "scattered flock," torn by the great disappointment after the midnight cry, gradually with the dawn of the fuller light on the sanctuary and the gospel commission, they came to the clear Scriptural position declared and implied in the spirit of prophecy from its very first utterance in December, 1844, and uniformly onward. Truly, He who bestowed the gift of the spirit of prophecy upon this people, guarded and guided that precious boon through the bewildering confusion of that brief period of reconstruction and adjustment. He who led in the initiation of the threefold message will lead it through to its triumphant conclusion, despite the faulty vision and erring judgment of His earthly followers. Truly, this movement is of God.

helping to promote the great causes of the remnant church in the finishing of God's work.

There will be more preaching of the word, more preparation, printing, and circulation of our literature, more training and encouragement of our lay members in doing home missionary work. There will be more effort and zeal in our educational work in training the young as workers for the cause of God. There will be more instruction given to our churches regarding the needs of both home and

foreign missions, and stronger support of the work in tithes and offerings. All these things will be carried on the hearts of men who are truly spiritual, and will be the fruit borne by lives that have been filled with the life of the Master. In this way God's plan for the finishing of His work will be carried out, and the world will be prepared for the coming of Jesus. In this way we can make full proof of our ministry, walk fully in the steps of our Master, and thus fulfill all His commands.

disappointment in 1844, was cautious and slow. In the very nature of the case, as the time came, and for a short period thereafter, they believed that their work for sinners was at an end. Later, as they studied, they received the light on the question of the sanctuary, and saw in the words of the Scripture that they "must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

8. But while, after the passing of the time in 1844, they continued for a period to believe that salvation for sinners was past and that Christ would quickly appear, there was no statement from Mrs. E. G. White to the effect that it had been revealed to her that probation for the world had closed, and that there was no longer salvation for the unsaved.

There is a vast difference between holding a personal belief regarding a question, and declaring that this belief has been obtained by a direct revelation from the Lord. To illustrate: The apostle Peter and his associates believed that the gospel message they were to proclaim was to be confined to the Jewish nation, and that the Gentile world was not included in the purpose of God nor in His commission to them. They not only believed this, but clung to it tenaciously. None of them, however, declared that this had been revealed to them in a vision or revelation from God. But in time the apostle Peter was given a vision by the Lord on the subject, and the instruction he received through that vision squarely contradicted the personal view he had held and taught. This, with additional revelations, finally led him, and all the disciples, to abandon their first views and adopt a correct theory. But they were so cautious and slow in making changes that it took years to get into the full light. All this we learn from the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.

Statements of Mrs. White Concerning Her Belief and Teaching

The one sure and satisfactory way of arriving at the truth of the question under consideration is by a careful examination of the published utterances of Mrs. White during that period. For many years the officers of the General Conference have made earnest efforts to secure a copy of every document that was printed by our pioneers in the early years of our cause. They have called for these through the columns of our papers, and have carried on correspondence with elderly people who have been identified with us for the longest period of time. They have also corresponded with descendants and acquaintances of the oldest believers who have passed away.

The Shut Door and the Close of Probation

The Position of the Spirit of Prophecy Between 1844 and 1851, as Revealed in Original Sources of Our Early Documents and Periodicals

Second Series — No. 1

By A. G. DANIELLS

FROM time to time there is brought to the attention of Seventh-day Adventists a subject concerning which there is more or less perplexity, designated by the terms "the shut door" and "the close of probation in 1844." The persons who feel constrained to call attention to this subject in its various phases, seem to think that there are difficulties which should be removed, mistakes and wrongs which should be explained and made right; and the claim is made that the reliability of the utterances of the Spirit of prophecy is involved in this matter. One writer makes the following statement:

"*'The Shut Door, or Probation for Sinners Ended Oct. 22, 1844.'* The above title indicated the theory held and dogmatically taught by all Seventh-day Adventists until the autumn of 1851. . . . Mrs. White had revelation after revelation in her visions during this same time confirming this theory."

For the benefit of those who may not understand just what is involved in such assertions, and may not be in possession of the actual facts in the matter, the following brief review of the subject has been prepared, and is devoted primarily to an examination of the writings of Mrs. E. G. White during the period referred to,—from 1844 to 1851.

As to the general question, the following statements express the truth:

1. The people who were clearly and fully identified with what was known as the "second advent movement" just prior to the autumn of 1844, believed very sincerely that the Saviour would return to this world in 1844.

2. They believed also that at His coming the ministry of Christ for

sinners would cease, and that thereafter there would be no salvation for sinners.

3. This, they believed, would mark the time for "shutting the door" of the sanctuary, thus closing the work of salvation which had so long been offered to sinners by our great High Priest.

4. The year 1844 passed, but the Saviour did not come as they had looked for Him. This was a fearful disappointment to the sincere believers. They could not understand why He did not come. They were thrown into great perplexity and confusion. Had probation closed, and was the destiny of the human race fixed?

5. Many still held the conviction that although Christ had not come to earth, He had left the sanctuary, that the door was shut, and that there was no longer opportunity for sinners to be saved. William Miller said:

"We have done our work in warning sinners, and in trying to awake a formal church. God in His providence has shut the door; we can only stir one another up to be patient, and be diligent to make our calling and election sure."—*The Advent Herald*, Dec. 11, 1844.

6. In this state of disappointment, perplexity, and confusion, some turned away, rejecting the whole experience as a great human mistake and deception. Others held on by faith, and through earnest study and prayer endeavored to find an explanation of it all. These latter abandoned such errors in their views as were revealed to them from time to time.

7. Those who later became Seventh-day Adventists were among the latter class. Their change from the position which they held at the time of the

All Statements Available

This endeavor has resulted in a collection of all the printed documents containing the writings of Mrs. E. G. White, in their original form, that were issued from 1844 to the autumn of 1851, with one exception. It is therefore possible to give every one of Mrs. White's statements regarding the shut door and the close of probation in 1844 in the order in which they occur, and with one exception (which will be explained later), as they ap-

pear in the publications in which they were first printed.

It is possible to do more than this. A full list of all her articles and letters which are to be found in any of our publications up to the close of 1851, is produced in this review. These documents are the original sources of the history of our cause during those years. It is from the statements which Mrs. White herself made in those early publications that we learn what she believed and taught at that time.

the subject of such bitter and determined attacks from the enemies of the truth today! How helpless is the church of God against the wiles of Satan when no prophet speaks to warn against his plan of attack! There is a fullness of meaning in the words, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." They mean just what they say.

Another Subtle Scheme

But there is still another way that the adversary uses in his warfare against the church, which will invariably succeed just as well as if there were no prophet. It is to lead the people to pay no heed to warnings when they are given; for it is just as true that the people "perish" when the prophet gives the warning and it is not heeded, as if there had been no prophet to point out the danger. This sad truth has often been demonstrated in times past. (See 2 Chron. 36:14-21.) As applied to the remnant church under the last message, see the warning given in the "Testimonies," Volume V, pages 77, 78.

May God help us to repent sincerely of the many ways in which we as a people have failed to believe and heed the warnings He has sent us through the Spirit of prophecy.

"Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chron. 20:20. There can be no stability, no true prosperity, otherwise.

The Law of God and the Spirit of Prophecy

By I. A. CRANE

"THE dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17.

The law of God and the Spirit of prophecy cannot be separated. We find them bound together in the foregoing scripture, forming the basis of Satan's most vehement attack against the remnant church. They are found together in Proverbs 29:18: "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

Satan is a rebel against the government of God. It is therefore very natural that he should hate the law of God, which is the foundation of His government. Being in rebellion against God, it is natural, of course, that he should hate and persecute those who show their loyalty to God by keeping all His commandments. We are told in "The Great Controversy," page 618, that Satan "numbers the world as his subjects; but the little company who keep the commandments of God are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete." And he hates the Spirit of prophecy manifested among them, for through this means they are kept constantly warned of all his deceptive plans.

As an illustration of the ever-present protection afforded the people of God through the Spirit of prophecy, we read in 2 Kings 6:8-23 that when the king of Syria warred against Israel, he was thwarted in every plan to entrap Israel's armies, because they were warned by the prophet of God. So completely did this defeat all his plans that the king began to suspect that some of his own men were proving traitors by revealing their plan of attack to the king of Israel. When, however, he had learned that the prophet Elisha was constantly forewarning the king, he left off trying

to war against Israel until he could destroy the prophet Elisha. This was all he could do. So long as they had a living prophet among them and were disposed to heed his warnings, they could not be overcome by their enemies.

It is so today. The king of Syria saw just what Satan sees in his warfare against the remnant church in the last conflict. As long as they remain faithful to the commandments of God, he cannot overcome them; and just as long as the Spirit of prophecy is manifested among them and they heed the warnings thus given, he never can hope to deceive and ensnare them.

Verily the commandments of God and the Spirit of prophecy do belong together. No wonder that both are

The Church of the Living God---No. 9

Our Part in the Plan of Salvation

By MILTON CHARLES WILCOX

ALL that God asks is that we shall yield our ways, our will, our sins, ourselves to Him, and He will accept us, clothe us with His righteousness, and count us among His children. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be put to shame." Rom. 10:10, 11.

One may say, "My sins are so great that I cannot be forgiven." Listen to His word to corrupt and rebellious Israel: "Come on now, and let us plead together, saith Jehovah; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be like wool." This is quoted from Bishop Lowth's great translation of Isaiah 1:18. The thought of the text is that of the Lord Jesus coming to the discouraged sinner, taking him by the hand, and say-

ing in effect, "It is true you have no standing at the court of heaven. That court will condemn you. But I have perfect standing. I am without sin. I know the Judge; He knows Me, the sinner's friend and Saviour. I will go with you to the Judge whom you fear." (See also Isa. 43:25, 26.) "Come on now, and let us plead together." "Though your sins be as scarlet," as crimson—why does He not say "black as night"? Because the deepest dyes and the hardest to eradicate are scarlet and crimson. It was once true, and may be still, that no chemical which man possessed would bleach white the deep-dyed scarlet or crimson without destroying the fiber of the fabric. But the forgiving grace of God revealed in the death of Christ will wash clean the heart from the stain of sin. The scarlet stain will become white as snow; the crimson record will be like

The Shut Door and the Close of Probation

The Position of the Spirit of Prophecy Between 1844 and 1851, as Revealed in Original Sources of Our Early Documents and Periodicals

Second Series — No. 2

By A. G. DANIELLS

[Last week, the first article of this series concluded with the statement that the question as to what Mrs. E. G. White taught regarding the "shut door" can be known of a certainty from the complete collection of early documents that are available. This week, the examination of these documents is begun.—Ed.]

Document No. 1

THE first printed document issued by the pioneers of our cause which contained any statements written by Mrs. E. G. White, was printed in Portland, Maine, in the spring of 1846. This document is not available; and it is the only publication containing statements by Mrs. White, printed between 1844 and 1852, of which we do not have an original copy in our vault. Concerning the statements from Mrs. White which appeared in that document, we have the following word of explanation from one of the pioneers, who assisted in the publication of the document:

"The vision, 'To the Remnant,' was given soon after the disappointment in 1844. A small edition of about 250 copies was printed in Portland, Maine, on a foolscap sheet, and circulated among the few believers and honest ones. The last page of the sheet was left partly blank, so that those receiving this document could have a place to write out their opinion of the same, whether favorable or unfavorable, and return to the publisher, if they wished. Elder James White was the publisher, and Brother H. S. Gurney [the writer], now of Memphis, Mich.,* stood half of the expense of printing. [The total cost was \$15.] This was the first form in which any of the views of Mrs. E. G. White were published. This was in the spring of 1846.

"[Signed] H. S. GURNEY."

We have never seen a copy of that foolscap sheet, and do not know whether there is a copy in existence today. However, that same message, addressed "To the Remnant," was reprinted in a tract of twenty-four pages, entitled, "A Word to the 'Little Flock.'" This tract was published by James White, at Brunswick, Maine, May 30, 1847, about one year after the printing of the foolscap sheet referred to. Four years later

the message was again reprinted, in a pamphlet, the title page of which read as follows:

"A SKETCH
OF THE
CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE
AND
VIEWS
of
ELLEN G. WHITE

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N. Y.
PUBLISHED BY JAMES WHITE
1851"

The tract and the pamphlet are both at hand, and we find in this first message from Mrs. White no reference to the shut door question. It does, however, contain a statement that has caused more or less perplexity and discussion. Here is the statement:

"It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the city, as all the wicked world which God had rejected."

This statement is all there is in the entire message that can be interpreted to mean that there was no longer salvation for sinners; and this is used by some as evidence that Mrs. White claimed to have been shown in vision that the whole world of sinners had at that time been rejected by the Lord, and that there was no salvation for any one who was not already within the fold.

But such an interpretation is not necessary. The truth is, that such interpretation is not in harmony with the general tenor of the message, as we shall see by a careful examination.

It may be well to call attention to the time when this message came, and to the conditions under which it came.

The message was given to Miss Ellen G. Harmon in her first vision, December, 1844, before her marriage to James White. This was not more than two months after the great disappointment of Oct. 22, 1844, and at a time when those who had been in the advent movement prior to 1844 were in the midst of great sorrow, uncertainty, and confusion. They had expected that the Saviour would come on the 22d day of October to translate them from this dark world of sin. He did not come! Why not?

Was He on the way? What were they to do? Was the whole movement a huge blunder? Was there nothing genuine in it? Should they all reject the whole affair, and in humiliation turn back to their old associations in the world?

Such was the uncertain, perplexing situation. They knew not what to do. No clear, well-defined decisions had been made, no conclusions reached. Then came this positive message, addressed "To the Remnant;" and later the title was enlarged to read, "To the Remnant Scattered Abroad."

The message addressed "To the Remnant Scattered Abroad," is too lengthy to reproduce here in its entirety, but I quote the vital statements. The opening sentence reads as follows:

"As God has shown me in holy vision the travels of the advent people to the Holy City, and the rich reward to be given those who wait the return of their Lord from the wedding, it may be my duty to give you a short sketch of what God has revealed to me."

Then follows a description of the journey:

"The dear saints have got many trials to pass through. . . .

"While praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell on me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the advent people in the world, but could not find them—when a voice said to me, 'Look again, and look a little higher.'

"At this I raised my eyes and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the first end of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry.

"This light shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet so they might not stumble. And if they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe.

"But soon some grew weary, and they said the city was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a glorious light which waved over the advent band, and they shouted, Hallelujah! Others rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and got their eyes off the mark and lost sight

* This statement was written in 1891. The writer is now deceased.

of Jesus, and fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below. It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the city, as all the wicked world which God had rejected.

"They fell all the way along the path one after another, until we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake.

"When God spake the time, he poured on us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai.

"By this time the 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name."—Mrs. E. G. White, in "A Word to the 'Little Flock,'" Brunswick, Maine, May 30, 1847. James White, Publisher.

Let us note the main points in this outline:

1. The path to the Holy City was straight and narrow, and high above the world. This undoubtedly represents the high standard of Christian experience and life the remnant church is to maintain to the end of the journey.

2. A bright light was set up at the beginning of the path, which shone all along the way, so that they might not stumble.

3. Jesus was leading them to the city. Those who kept their eyes on Him were safe.

4. In making the journey, the believers had many trials to pass through.

5. After entering upon the journey, the end of the path, where the Holy City stood, seemed a long way off to some who had expected to reach the city soon. These grew weary of the trials and the waiting.

6. But Jesus gave them fresh light and courage, and they shouted, "Hallelujah!" and pressed on.

7. When the company reached the end of the journey, there were 144,000 of them, all sealed and perfectly united, ready for the Saviour to translate them.

Here we pause to inquire, Where did this great company of living saints—144,000 in number—come from? The view of this journey was given about two months after the disappointment of 1844. There was no such company "all sealed and perfectly united" at that time. In fact, the sealing message which was to de-

velop the 144,000 was not then understood. *It is plainly evident that this view revealed a great evangelical movement in operation throughout the world until the coming of the Lord.* It surely involves the gathering of a great company of people who were nowhere in sight when the view was given. It certainly does not indicate that the gospel work had been finished, and that probation for sinners had closed.

8. But while making the journey, some "rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God who had led them out so far." This was a very serious conclusion to reach. It was Jesus, their Saviour, who was leading them. In that denial of divine leadership, they were rejecting Christ, the light of the world. As there is no other name, no other means, whereby it is possible to be saved, those who turned away from Him cut themselves off from all light, help, and hope.

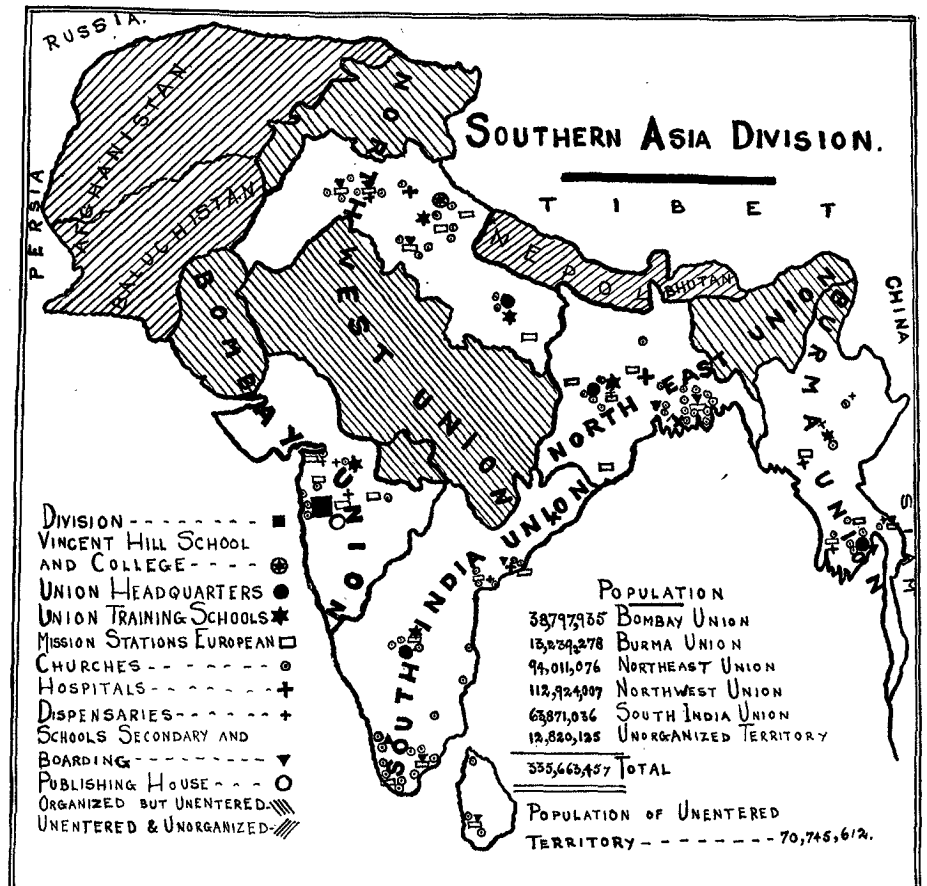
9. All the way along the journey, some "fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below." In rejecting Christ as leader, they turned back to the leadership of the prince of darkness and despair, and united with those in this "dark and wicked world" who were "without Christ, . . . having no hope, and without God in the world." Eph. 2:12.

10. "It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go

to the city, as all the wicked world which God had rejected." The people who rejected the divine Leader, Christ, had been highly honored by the Lord. They had been lifted to high table-lands of Christian experience and fellowship with Christ; but they turned from their Leader, and "rashly denied" that the light and experience and fellowship that had come to them was from God.

When Israel at Kadesh-barnea, on the very border of Canaan, rashly denied that it was God who had led them all that wonderful way, by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, and turned to go back to Egypt, that dark and wicked land, they sealed their doom. By rashly denying God's leadership, they cut themselves off from the great privilege of ever entering the Land of Promise. Deut. 1:19-31.

In the epistle to the Hebrews we are told what a terrible thing it is for those who have once been signally blessed of God in rich spiritual experiences, to turn away from Him. "It is impossible," the epistle declares, "for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." Heb. 6:4-6.



This picture and others in the fore part of the paper illustrate features of the work in the Southern Asia Division, which is presented in "Mission Lands" Department.

It is not difficult for any experienced student of the Bible to understand that there have always been individuals, cities, and nations in this world in revolt and rebellion against God, which have been rejected by Him. How can we, on any other basis, explain God's dealings with individuals and with nations through the whole history of the world? "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:38), is the fiat that has gone forth from God to more than one nation or class of people.

When the great advent movement was being carried forward by sincere, consecrated men and women, under the leadership of Christ Himself, it was opposed, derided, and hindered with a bitter, satanic hatred by a large class of people who could and should have known better. When ridicule and jeering failed, there was resort to mob violence.

How far such separated themselves from God, He alone knows. To what extent God rejected that part of the wicked world, who can say? And the impossibility of such ever even desiring to get on that straight, narrow, and high path, cast up for the despised people of God, is quite evident; and the impossibility of those who "rashly denied" Christ as their leader, left the path, and turned back to the scoffing world, ever even desiring to get back onto that straight and narrow path, so high above the world, is not difficult to understand.

Now it is this particular statement which troubles and perplexes some. They take it to mean that at that time,—when this view was given, December, 1844,—the whole wicked world had been rejected, and that there was no possible salvation for them. But such an interpretation gives a meaning which conflicts with the message of which it forms a part. Not another sentence in the entire message implies, even remotely, what some interpret this sentence to mean.

Is it exactly fair to take a single brief sentence from its context, and place a meaning upon it which makes it conflict with the document as a whole? Is it not more reasonable and consistent to conclude that the wording of the sentence is not clear—that it does not express fully, and without possibility of misunderstanding, just what the writer had in mind? We can understand how this state of things might have been expressed more clearly; but the obscurity of the phrase need not destroy our faith in the messenger. The writer sincerely believes that the statement as it reads,—“It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the city, as all the wicked

world which God had rejected,”—does not, taken apart from the context, express the view of the author as clearly as was intended. This opinion is strengthened by the action of Mrs. White when, in revising the printed message, she eliminated this sentence.

Mrs. White never claimed verbal inspiration nor infallibility in the use of language in her writings. She did, however, claim the right to revise them, and her claim has been recognized by the leaders of the denomination from the earliest days.

As has been previously stated, the publication in 1847 of the message as we now have it, was in a tract bearing the title, “A Word to the ‘Little Flock.’” Its next appearance in

from page 16 of twenty-three printed lines. In other places, single words, or brief sentences of two or three words are omitted. Then again, there are various substitutions of words for those in the original, as, for instance, the word “better” is substituted for “upper” in referring to the heavenly abode; the word “glittering” is used instead of “golden” in referring to crowns, etc. In all, there are eleven omissions and ten slight changes in the printed message of 1851 as compared with the printed document of 1847.

The elimination which is of particular interest in this connection, is the first referred to, a portion of which is as follows: “It was just as impossible for them to get on the path



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print was in 1851, when it was included in a pamphlet entitled, “A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White.” On page 9 of this pamphlet, Mrs. White refers to the republication of this message as follows:

“Here I will give the view that was first published in 1846. *In this view I saw only a very few of the events of the future.* More recent views have been more full. *I shall therefore leave out a portion and prevent repetition.*” (Italics ours.)

Immediately following this statement is the message entitled, “To the Remnant Scattered Abroad.”

In comparing this reprint, as it appears in this pamphlet, “Experience and Views,” with the same message as it appeared in the former publication—the tract entitled, “A Word to the ‘Little Flock,’”—we find that the author thought best to make quite a number of changes and omissions. For example:

There is an omission from page 10 of two sentences involving thirty-nine words. There is also an omission

again and go to the city, as all the wicked world which God had rejected.”

Thus it will be seen that the sentence which seems so perplexing to some was eliminated by the author herself. She evidently saw that it could be misinterpreted to conflict with the rest of the message, and eliminated it.

Fill the Mind With Great Thoughts

God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of the Scriptures.—“*Christ's Object Lessons*,” p. 60.

"Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned." Rom. 5:12. If, then, a house or family is to continue forever, sin and death must be conquered. When therefore Jehovah promised David that his house should continue forever, there was involved the assurance that sin and death would be abolished, and so the work of God in redemption through Christ was plainly revealed.

But let us think a bit further. In developing that fundamental principle of the gospel, justification by faith, the apostle Paul uses the words of David in a very significant way: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin." Rom. 4:7, 8. But this testimony of David is cited as the unfolding of the blessing enjoyed by the man "unto whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works." Verse 6. In other words, the blessing for which David prayed in order that his house might continue forever, was the essential blessing of the forgiveness of sin and the impartation of a new life through the atoning death and the mediatorial intercession of David's Son and

David's Lord, the Son of man and the Son of God.

We are living in the time of the seventh trumpet, when we look for the fulfillment of the announcement, "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ [the Son of David]: and He shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 11:15. This will mark the complete triumph over sin and death. This will usher in the everlasting reign of the Wonderful One "upon the throne of David." But there is a work to be done in preparation for this event, and this is the preaching of "the everlasting gospel . . . to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," as set forth in Revelation 14:6. And the very heart of this threefold message is the blessing of Abraham, the blessing promised to David, the blessing of the forgiveness of sin through the imputed righteousness of Christ bestowed as a gift to faith. Let this message be proclaimed everywhere, so that the everlasting kingdom promised to the Son of David may speedily be established. This threefold message proclaims the final phase of the work of God in redemption through Christ, the last chapter in the great theme of the Bible.

"I saw that God had children who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They had not rejected the light on it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully. This enraged the churches, and nominal Adventists, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth. And at this time God's chosen all saw clearly that we had the truth, and they came out and endured the persecution with us."

This clearly states she "saw" many embracing the Sabbath truth and joining this people. These were from among those who had not rejected the light. The marked movement here referred to is at the "commencement of the time of trouble." On pages 3 and 4 of the "Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views," published in 1854, Sister White explains at length the precise meaning and time of the fulfillment, as follows:

"On page 17, is as follows:—'I saw that the Holy Sabbath is, and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers; and that the Sabbath is the great question, to unite the hearts of God's dear, waiting saints. I saw that God had children, who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They had not rejected the light on it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully.'

"This view was given in 1847, when there were but very few of the advent brethren observing the Sabbath, and of these, but few supposed that its observance was of sufficient importance to draw a line between the people of God and unbelievers. Now, the fulfillment of that view is beginning to be seen.

"The commencement of the time of trouble,' here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out; but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, the nations will be angry, yet held in check, so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the 'latter rain,' or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out."

Document No. 5

The next message was entitled, "God's Love for His People," and is found on page 21 of "Experience and Views." No reference whatever is

The Shut Door and the Close of Probation

The Position of the Spirit of Prophecy Between 1844 and 1851, as Revealed in Original Sources of Our Early Documents and Periodicals

Second Series — No. 3

By A. G. DANIELLS

Document No. 2

THE second printed document, or letter, from the pen of Mrs. White, dated April 7, 1847, was given to the public in "A Word to the 'Little Flock,'" p. 18. This is a letter addressed to "Dear Brother Bates." In this letter there is not the slightest reference to the shut door or the close of probation.

Document No. 3

The third message, or letter, from Mrs. White was printed in "A Word to the 'Little Flock.'" This was written at Topsham, Maine, April 21, 1847, and was addressed to Eli Curtis. This message refers to the "shut door" as follows:

"The Lord has shown me in vision, that Jesus rose up, and shut the door, and entered the holy of holies, at the 7th month, 1844; but Michael's standing up (Dan. 12:1) to deliver His people, is in the future. . . .

"I believe the sanctuary, to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days,

is the New Jerusalem temple, of which Christ is a minister. The Lord showed me in vision, more than one year ago, that Brother Crosier had the true light, on the cleansing of the sanctuary, etc.; and that it was His will, that Brother C. should write out the view which he gave us in the *Day-Star*, Extra, February 7, 1846. I feel fully authorized by the Lord, to recommend that Extra, to every saint."—"A Word to the 'Little Flock,'" p. 12.

There is no hint in this that the shutting of the door of the first apartment meant the closing of probation for sinners.

Document No. 4

The fourth view was given in 1847 while Mrs. White was at Topsham, Maine, and is recorded in "Experience and Views," pages 15-19. Presenting a detailed description of the heavenly temple, the two apartments, the ark, the tables of stone, and the fourth commandment shining with outstanding brilliance, Mrs. White said:

here made to the shut door or anything relating thereto.

Document No. 6

On Dec. 16, 1848, a brief view was presented on the "Shaking of the Powers of Heaven." But it has no bearing on this question. It is recorded on pages 23 and 24 of "Experience and Views."

Document No. 7

The seventh document we have from Mrs. White is a message entitled, "To Those Who Are Receiving the Seal of the Living God," received Jan. 5, 1849. This was printed on one side of a sheet 10½ inches wide by 15½ inches long. It is dated at Topsham, Maine, Jan. 31, 1849, and signed "E. G. White." Not the remotest hint can be found in this message regarding the shut door or the close of probation in 1844. The greater portion of this document was reprinted in our first church paper, *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 22, 23, published at Middletown, Conn., August, 1849. Later this same matter was published in a pamphlet entitled, "A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White," printed at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., 1851, by James White.

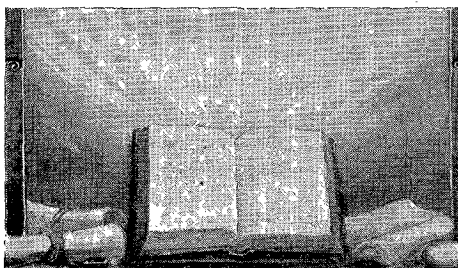
Again it may be said that in this whole message no reference is made to the shut door and no-more-salvation-for-sinners question. On the other hand, it contains much that indicates that the gospel work was still going forward, and would continue to do so until our Lord closes His work in the most holy place just before He returns.

Document No. 8

The eighth printed statement from Mrs. White appears in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 21, 22, August, 1849. This is addressed, "Dear Brethren and Sisters," and was given to her March 24, 1849. It was later reprinted in "Experience and Views," pp. 24-27, 1851. In "Experience and Views" this article is entitled, "The Open and Shut Door." This is the first statement I have found from her in any printed document devoted entirely to the shut-door question. I will quote from this article every line that refers to the shut door:

"Sabbath, March 24th, 1849, we had a sweet, and very interesting meeting with the brethren at Topsham, Me. The Holy Ghost was poured out upon us, and I was taken off in the Spirit to the city of the living God. There I was shown that the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, relating to the shut door, could not be separated, and that the time for the commandments of God to shine out, with all their importance, and for God's people to be tried on the Sab-

bath truth, was when the door was opened in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, where the ark is, containing the ten commandments. This door was not opened, until the mediation of Jesus was finished in the holy place of the sanctuary in 1844. Then, Jesus rose up, and shut the door in the holy place, and opened the door in the most holy, and passed within the second veil, where He now stands



God's Word Endures

BY C. PELMULDER

THIS dying world moves on, and on,
and on;

Anon the days and years and ages pass.
One generation is today, but soon 'tis
gone,
And we become aware all flesh is grass.

Cities and empires crumble into dust,
Their towers and temples into ruins
mold,

With glory and renown in which men
trust;

But God's eternal word does not grow
old.

The wisdom of this world shall come to
naught,

The glory of its princes fall away,
As flowers of the field by death are caught
To turn to dust, to molder and decay.

But God's eternal word shall aye endure,
Nor lapse of time nor ages can despoil.
This earth shall be renewed and made
secure

Against decay and death and fruitless
toil.

York, Nebr.



by the ark; and where the faith of Israel now reaches.

"I saw that Jesus had shut the door in the holy place, and no man can open it; and that He had opened the door in the most holy, and no man can shut it: (See Rev. 3:7, 8:) and

that since Jesus has opened the door in the most holy place, which contains the ark, the commandments have been shining out to God's people, and they are being tested on the Sabbath question.

"I saw that the present test on the Sabbath could not come, until the mediation of Jesus in the holy place was finished; and He had passed within the second veil; therefore, Christians, who fell asleep before the door was opened in the most holy, when the midnight cry was finished, at the seventh month 1844, and had not kept the true Sabbath, now rest in hope; for they had not the light, and the test on the Sabbath, which we now have, since that door was opened. I saw that Satan was tempting some of God's people on this point. Because so many good Christians have fallen asleep in the triumphs of faith, and have not kept the true Sabbath, they were doubting about it being a test for us now.

"I saw that the enemies of the present truth have been trying to open the door of the holy place, that Jesus has shut; and to close the door of the most holy place, which He opened in 1844, where the ark is containing the two tables of stone, on which are written the ten commandments, by the finger of Jehovah. . . .

"I saw that the mysterious signs and wonders, and false reformations would increase, and spread. The reformations that were shown me, were not reformations from error to truth; but from bad to worse; for those who professed a change of heart, had only wrapped about them a religious garb, which covered up the iniquity of a wicked heart. Some appeared to have been really converted, so as to deceive God's people; but if their hearts could be seen, they would appear as black as ever.

"My accompanying angel bade me look for the travail of souls for sinners as used to be. I looked, but could not see it; for the time for their salvation is past."

Statements in the last two paragraphs are understood by some to teach that after 1844 it was impossible for any of the unconverted to be saved, because "the time of their salvation is past." Much criticism of these statements might have been spared had the objectors read and accepted the explanation Mrs. White gave of them in the "Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views," published at Rochester, N. Y., in 1854. She says:

"DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS:—As I have given a brief sketch of my experience and views, published in 1851, it seems to be my duty to notice some points in that little work; also, to give more recent views. . . .

"The view of the 'Open and Shut Door,' on pages 24-27, was given in 1849. The application of Rev. 3:7, 8, to the heavenly sanctuary and Christ's ministry, was entirely new to me. I had never heard the idea advanced by any one. Now, as the subject of the sanctuary is being clearly understood, the application is seen in its beauty and force.

"The 'false reformations' referred to on page 27, are yet to be more fully seen. This view relates more particularly to those who have heard and rejected the light of the advent doctrine. They are given over to strong delusions. Such will not have 'the travail of soul for sinners' as formerly. Having rejected the advent, and being given over to the delusions of Satan,

'the time for their salvation is past.' This does not, however, relate to those who have not heard and have not rejected the doctrine of the second advent."—*Pages 3, 4.*

This explanation places these statements and the one in her first message, which has been examined at considerable length, very close together in meaning; namely, that they refer to a class who rejected God's message in such a flagrant manner as to place themselves beyond His reach. Esau so despised and rejected the birthright and patriarchal blessing that he lost it forever. Pharaoh, the haughty king of Egypt, rejected God's message and revelation of divine power with such insolence that he cut himself off from any further connection with God.

The Church of the Living God---No. 11

The Mission of the Church: "Come," "Tarry," "Go"

By MILTON CHARLES WILCOX

THE gospel, the good tidings, was not a new thing when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Its beginning carries us back to God's gracious offer of mercy to our first parents when they sinned and were driven from Eden. Through sin they found in God's "Garden of Delight" the curse of death.

But to them came the promise of hope, implied in the declaration that the coming Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. (See Gen. 3:15.) Longing for freedom from sin, when Cain was born Eve thought he was the Deliverer, and she said, "I have gotten a man with *the help of Jehovah.*" Gen. 4:1. The words in *italic* are not in the original; therefore the Baptist translation, "An Improved Edition," renders, "I have gotten a man with Jehovah." Spurrrell renders, "I have obtained the man Jehovah;" the Douay Version, "I have gotten a man through God;" Boothroyd, "I have acquired a man-child from Jehovah;" Rotherham's "Emphasized Bible," "I have gotten a man, even Yaweh." The hope was blighted by the character of Cain, but the promise of God held. The sacrificial lamb kept it alive. Sometime the Lord would send the Deliverer. They heard God's message, and believed, and all who were true to their mission passed the glad tidings on to others.

Abraham's Call

We pass by the great lessons in the days of Enoch and Noah, and consider the call to Abraham, "the father of all them that believe." It is found in Genesis 12:1-3: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the

land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing."

The call was not that Abraham might be blessed for his own sake, the blessing confined to him and his family, but that he might be a blessing to others, yea, even to "all the families of the earth." Yet Abraham, while he lived, never possessed the land. All his life he was a stranger and pilgrim; yet he leaned on the promise, and his faith in God was steadfast. Heb. 11:8, 9. Where he pitched tent, he built an altar to Jehovah. Young's translation gives the idea that he preached the gospel. He believed God. The altar he erected was a witness to the God who created the heaven and the earth. And so it was with his descendants, Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. Others saw the witness of the man of faith.

When God called Israel out of Egypt, the repeated demand through His servant Moses to the Pharaoh who then held them in bondage was, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me." Ex. 8:1, 20; 9:1, 13.

The Purpose of Their Freedom

When, on their journey to the land God had given them, they stood before the holy mountain freed from Egyptian bondage, Jehovah, the covenant God, their Deliverer, said to them:

"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then shall ye be Mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall

be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." Ex. 19:4-6.

Note the expression, "brought you unto Myself;" they belonged to Him. If they willed to keep in the life channel of His teaching and blessings, they would continue to be His "own possession." Then should they be unto Him a "kingdom of priests," a holy, separated, set-apart nation. Israel had her own priests in the tribe of Levi. But God would make of the whole purchased nation priests to the world, to teach the world the way, and the truth, and the life; for "the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of Jehovah of hosts." Mal. 2:7.

This was God's plan for Israel, His mission for the church of olden time, and the mission was committed to "the church in the wilderness." Acts 7:38. This was God's plan for Israel, God's messengers to the world. Read it in Deuteronomy 4:5-8. Read it in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple. 1 Kings 8:41-43. Read it in their inspired songs, for instance 1 Chronicles 16:8, 23, 24: "O give thanks unto Jehovah, call upon His name; make known His doings among the peoples." "Sing unto Jehovah, all the earth; show forth His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among . . . all the peoples."

Read the echo of all these in Isaiah 43:11, 12: "I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides Me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and I have saved, and I have showed; and there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are My witnesses, saith Jehovah, and I am God." "Ye are My witnesses . . . that I am God," reads the Authorized Version.

The Highway of Nations

That land of promise to Abraham and his heirs was a peculiar land. It was not a mistake that the children of Israel were placed there. The land of the promise, called Palestine, was the highway of the nations between the great centers of civilization the world knew for a long time,—Babylon, Assyria, Media, Persia, and others in the north, and Egypt, Ethiopia, and Arabia in the south. Here God placed His people to witness for Him. The great thought of holiness, of service, of witnessing for God, runs through the web of the Old Testament like a thread of gold in a fabric of blue. It must not be forgotten in captivity. The little captive maiden in Syria (the interesting story is told in 2 Kings 5) witnessed in the royal circles of Syria when her king in Israel was false.

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah witnessed for the covenant

was twelve years old when he began to reign" (2 Kings 21:1), it is evident that there was no heir to the throne at the time of Hezekiah's sickness, and that his death then would, according to human reasoning, have interfered with the fulfillment of the covenant-promise to David concerning the permanence of his dynasty. And yet we face the fact that Manasseh surpassed all preceding kings in his perversion of the worship of the true God, even setting up his idol in the very house of Jehovah, and he "seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that they did evil more than did the nations whom Jehovah destroyed before the children of Israel." 2 Chron. 33:9. Because the king and his people rejected the counsel of God concerning their course, "wherefore Jehovah brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh in chains, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon." Verse 11. There he repented, and was therefore restored to his kingdom, but the dire consequences of his evil course could not be avoided, as is indicated later by Jehovah's message delivered by the prophet Jeremiah: "I will cause them [the people of Judah] to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem." Jer. 15:4. So does the evil which men do live after them.

Warning Sounded by Amos

The warning of impending disaster as the inevitable result of the course which his people were pursuing was given through the voice of the prophets of God, beginning with Amos (Amos 6 and 7) and Isaiah (Isa. 39:6) and continuing by other messengers until Jeremiah foretold the captivity in Babylon for seventy years:

"Therefore thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Because ye have not heard My words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith Jehovah, and I will send unto Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the lamp. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." Jer. 25:8-11.

Both sacred and secular history testify that this prophecy was literally fulfilled. But what about the covenant-promise to David? When Jerusalem was utterly destroyed, the most of the people were carried to Babylon, and others went down to Egypt, what hope was there for the throne of David? No wonder that the psalmist asked in a tone of evident despair, "Lord, where are Thy former loving-kindnesses, which Thou swearst unto David in Thy faithfulness?" Ps. 89:49.

But were the people left without

hope? Certainly they were in deep trouble, as we read: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion." Ps. 137:1. And yet God did not forget His purpose of grace and mercy. We need to give some study to the period of apostasy leading up to the apparent failure of the covenant-promise in the triumph of Babylon, in order that we may discern the faithfulness of God in His work of redemption through Christ. This will be considered in the next article in our series.

The Shut Door and the Close of Probation

The Position of the Spirit of Prophecy Between 1844 and 1851, as Revealed in Original Sources of Our Early Documents and Periodicals

Second Series — No. 4

By A. G. DANIELLS

Document No. 9

THE ninth published statement we find is a letter addressed to the "Dear Brethren and Sisters." It is printed in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 4, p. 31, September, 1849; and reprinted in "Experience and Views," p. 27, under the heading, "The Trial of Our Faith." Here is what is said, and all that is said in this article, about the sanctuary, the shut door, and the close of probation:

"We have but a little space of time left to work for God. Nothing should be too dear to sacrifice, for the salvation of the scattered and torn flock of Jesus. . . .

"Jesus is still in His Holy Temple, and will now accept our sacrifices, our prayers, and our confessions of faults and sins, and will now pardon all the transgressions of Israel, that they may be blotted out before He leaves the sanctuary. When Jesus leaves the sanctuary, then he that is holy and righteous, will be holy and righteous still; for all their sins will then be blotted out, and they will be sealed with the seal of the living God. But those that are unjust and filthy, will be unjust and filthy still; for then there will be no Priest in the sanctuary to offer their sacrifices, their confessions, and their prayers before the Father's throne. Therefore, what is done to rescue souls from the coming storm of wrath, must be done before Jesus leaves the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary."

Surely this statement does not indicate that Christ had closed His ministry for a lost world. But it does say that "what is done to rescue souls from the coming storm of wrath must

be done before Jesus leaves the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary."

Document No. 10

The tenth document is a vision given to encourage Brother Ralph to labor for Brother Rhodes (*Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 5, p. 35). This was received about Nov. 19, 1849, and contained the following sentence:

"I saw that in Bro. Rhodes' mouth there had been no guile in speaking against the present truth, relating to the Sabbath, and shut door."

No definition is here given of what is embraced by the expression "shut door" as here used.

Document No. 11

The eleventh document is another letter in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 8, p. 64, March, 1850, addressed to "My Dear Brethren and Sisters." This letter has two paragraphs, and occupies four inches of space. In it occurs this statement:

"The excitement and false reformations of this day do not move us, for we know that the Master of the house rose up in 1844, and shut the door of the first apartment of the heavenly tabernacle; and now we certainly expect that they will 'go with their flocks,' 'to seek the Lord; but they shall not find Him; He hath withdrawn Himself (within the second veil) from them.' The Lord has shown me that the power which is with them is a mere human influence, and not the power of God."

The reformations here referred to are the false reformations quoted and explained in Document No. 8. They were conducted by unconverted men who had rejected light from God, and

who had "wrapped about them a religious garb which covered their iniquity."

Document No. 12

The twelfth is a message addressed "To the 'Little Flock,'" printed in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 9, p. 71, April, 1850; reprinted in "Experience and Views," p. 29, 1851. In this message there is no reference to the sanctuary, the shut door, nor the close of probation.

Document No. 13

The thirteenth document is another letter addressed to the "Dear Brethren and Sisters." It is found in *Present Truth*, Vol. I, No. 11, p. 86, November, 1850. A portion of this letter is reprinted in "Experience and Views," p. 33, under the heading, "The Last Plagues and the Judgment." This letter makes no reference to the shut door nor the close of probation.

Remaining Documents

In this closing section I shall place twelve very short messages given in the last twenty-one pages of "Experience and Views." There is no reference whatever made in these twelve short articles to the shut door nor to the close of probation in 1844.

This brings us down to August, 1851. As it is claimed that Mrs. White and her associates changed their position on the shut door and the no-salvation-for-sinners question after 1851, I do not think it is necessary for me to follow the matter further.

So far as I can learn from the documents in our possession, I have given the correct citation to everything that came from the pen of Mrs. White from 1844 to the close of 1851, and I have given every line of her statements regarding the shut door and the close of probation questions. Here is what we find:

1. That during that period of six years there were printed in various forms twenty-five separate messages, articles, and letters from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White.

2. That in only five articles or letters of this number is there any reference made to the shut door and the close of probation.

3. That in not one of the five references to the shut door does Mrs. White state that the door of the second apartment of the sanctuary in which Christ ministers as High Priest or Mediator for a lost world, was closed in 1844. Nor does she once state that there was no salvation for any sinners after 1844.

4. That in all that was printed from the pen of Mrs. White during eight years,—1844-1851,—we find three statements so worded that two differ-

ent and conflicting interpretations can be placed upon them. But this is not to be counted as strange, for we find the same perplexity in certain passages of Scripture. The views here maintained make the statements harmonious with the general tenor of the messages of which they are parts, and with all the rest of her printed messages.

The writer believes that any one who will study this subject impartially, with only the desire to arrive at the truth, must come to the conclusion that while the early Adventists—i. e., those who were disappointed in 1844—believed for a time that probation closed on the tenth day of the seventh month, and even if Mrs. E. G. White for a time shared personally this view in common with those with whom she associated, there is no evidence to show that she ever put it forth as revealed to her from the Lord. The statements relied upon by some to show this, do not prove it. And it is certain that other things she wrote

between 1844 and 1851 are entirely inconsistent with such a view.

It is further apparent that while for six or seven years after the 1844 disappointment, the Seventh-day Adventist believers held that their work was for the "scattered flock," torn by the great disappointment after the midnight cry, gradually with the dawn of the fuller light on the sanctuary and the gospel commission, they came to the clear Scriptural position declared and implied in the Spirit of prophecy from its very first utterance in December, 1844, and uniformly onward. Truly, He who bestowed the gift of the Spirit of prophecy upon this people, guarded and guided that precious boon through the bewildering confusion of that brief period of reconstruction and adjustment. He who led in the initiation of the three-fold message will lead it through to its triumphant conclusion, despite the faulty vision and erring judgment of His earthly followers. Truly, this movement is of God.

The Church of the Living God---No. 12

The Endowment of the Church—the Gift of the Holy Spirit

By MILTON CHARLES WILCOX

"What in me is dark, illumine; what is low, raise and support."—*Milton*.

No wise firm sends out its representatives on important business into new and untried territory unless they are fitted by character and experience for the work expected of them. No well-organized government sends its armies into a hostile country until they are equipped and drilled, and the probable needs supplied. So when the Christ of God commissions His church to do a work that affects the very universe of God, and sends her out into the world of sin, He fits her for that work.

Therefore, after the resurrection of our Lord, as we have already learned, He called His apostles and disciples together and gave them their commission to go into all the world and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name—the character—of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, instructing their converts to observe the teachings of Christ, and assuring them that His presence and constant companionship would be with them to the end of the gospel age.

During the forty days that followed His resurrection, Jesus met with His disciples, instructed them in the Scriptures, and charged them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the realization of the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father,—God's plenipotential gift which would

both endow His church with an inexhaustible treasure, and fit her to accomplish the great commission with which she was intrusted.

John the Baptist had predicted that Jesus would baptize His own with the Holy Spirit. Luke 3:16. Jesus had promised on the last day, the great day, of a Feast of Tabernacles: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, . . . from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." John 7:37-39.

The Promises of Jesus

From the promises of Jesus we quote the passages that follow:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, that will I do. If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: ye know Him;

The Shut Door and the Close of Probation

An Important Statement From Mrs. E. G. White

By ARTHUR G. DANIELLS

SOME years ago I found in a book written against Seventh-day Adventists in general, and Mrs. Ellen G. White in particular, the following statement:

"The Shut Door, or Probation for Sinners, Ended October 22, 1844!"

"The above title indicated the theory held and dogmatically taught by all Seventh-day Adventists until the autumn of 1851. . . .

"Mrs. White had revelation after revelation in her visions during this same time confirming this theory."

The assertion that Mrs. E. G. White claimed that it had been revealed to her in vision that there was no salvation for sinners after 1844, was something I could not believe. I had never heard this before, and of course could not accept the statement without positive evidence. I felt that the seriousness of the charge warranted a careful review of Mrs. White's writings with special relation to this question.

I therefore decided to read again every line to be found in print from the pen of Mrs. White from 1844 to 1852. When I had finished this study, the falseness of the above charge was clearly apparent. I found no claim in her writings that the Lord had shown her in vision that the probation of the human race had closed in 1844, and that therefore there was no salvation for sinners after that date. Having satisfied myself anew that the charge made against her on this point was untrue, I decided to make public exactly what I had found. This I did through the columns of the REVIEW AND HERALD. This was reprinted first in a little pamphlet entitled, "The Shut Door and the Close of Probation," and later in a pamphlet entitled, "The Faith of the Pioneers," procurable from our Book and Bible Houses.

In this statement I reproduced every word, so far as any one knew, that Mrs. White wrote regarding this subject from 1844 to 1852. In closing my review of this important and interesting subject I gave the following summary of my findings:

"So far as I can learn from the documents in our possession, I have given the correct citation to everything that came from the pen of Mrs. White from 1844 to the close of 1851, and I have given every line of her statements regarding the shut door and the close of probation questions. Here is what we find:

"1. That during that period of seven years there were printed in various forms twenty-five separate messages, articles, and letters from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White.

"2. That in only five articles or letters of this number is there any reference made to the shut door and the close of probation.

"3. That in not one of the five references to the shut door does Mrs. White state that the door of the second apartment of the sanctuary in which Christ ministers as High Priest or Mediator for a lost world, was closed in 1844. Nor does she once state that there was no salvation for any sinners after 1844.

"4. That in all that was printed from the pen of Mrs. White during the seven years,—1844-1851,—we find three statements so worded that two different and conflicting interpretations can be placed upon them. But this is not to be counted as strange, for we find the same perplexity in certain passages of Scripture. The views here maintained make the statements harmonious with the general tenor of the messages of which they are parts, and with all the rest of her printed messages.

"The writer believes that any one who will study this subject impartially, with only the desire to arrive at the truth, must come to the conclusion that while the early Adventists—i. e., those who were disappointed in 1844—believed for a time that probation closed on the tenth day of the seventh month, and even if Mrs. E. G. White for a time shared personally this view in common with those with whom she associated, there is no evidence to show that she ever put it forth as revealed to her from the Lord. The statements relied upon by some to show this, do not prove it. And it is certain that other things she wrote between 1844 and 1851 are entirely inconsistent with such a view.

"It is further apparent that while for six or seven years after the 1844 disappointment, the Seventh-day Adventist believers held that their work was for the 'scattered flock,' torn by the great disappointment after the midnight cry, gradually with the dawn of the fuller light on the sanctuary and the gospel commission, they came to the clear Scriptural position declared and implied in the Spirit of prophecy from its very first utterance in December, 1844, and uniformly onward. Truly, He who bestowed the gift of the Spirit of prophecy upon this people, guarded and guided that precious boon through the bewildering confusion of that brief period of reconstruction and adjustment. He who led in the initiation of the threefold message will lead it through to its triumphant conclusion, despite the faulty vision and erring judgment of His earthly followers. Truly, this movement is of God." (See editorial note following.)

It will be seen from this summary that admission is made that for a period of years after 1844 pioneer Seventh-day Adventists understood that probation for sinners closed in 1844. It is admitted that possibly Mrs. White held this view. But it is also confidently declared that in not one of her published statements did she claim that it had been revealed to

her by the Lord that there was no salvation for sinners after 1844.

And now I am able to add to this a very positive statement from Mrs. White regarding this matter. During the last few months the trustees of the Mrs. E. G. White estate have been having her old letters and documents carefully indexed and filed. These are being read as they are filed. Among them there has been found a letter written by Mrs. White regarding this matter. The letter is in her own handwriting. We have had the portion dealing with this question photographed. The accompanying reproduction is just as it came from her pen fifty-seven years ago.

BATTLE CREEK, MICH.,
Aug. 24, 1874.

DEAR BRO. LOUGHBOROUGH:

I hereby testify in the fear of God that the charges of Miles Grant, of Mrs. Burdick, and others published in the *Crisis* is not true. The statements in reference to my course in forty-four is false.

With my brethren and sisters, after the time passed in forty-four I did believe no more sinners would be converted. But I never had a vision that no more sinners would be converted. And am clear and free to state no one has ever heard me say or has read from my pen statements which will justify them in the charges they have made against me upon this point.

It was on my first journey east to relate my visions that the precious light in regard to the heavenly sanctuary was opened before me and I was shown the open and shut door. We believed that the Lord was soon to come in the clouds of heaven. I was shown that there was a great work to be done in the world for those who had not had the light and rejected it. Our brethren could not understand this with our faith in the immediate appearing of Christ. Some accused me of saying my Lord delayeth His coming, especially the fanatical ones. I saw that in '44 God had opened a door and no man could shut it, and shut a door and no man could open it. Those who rejected the light which was brought to the world by the message of the second angel went into darkness, and how great was that darkness.

I never have stated or written that the world was doomed or damned. I never have under any circumstances used this language to any one, however sinful. I have ever had messages of reproof for those who used these harsh expressions.

This was written in reply to charges made by one Miles Grant and others. Miles Grant was for a long time one of the able leaders of what were known as the First Day Adventists. He was very much opposed to Seventh-day Adventists, and in his opposition circulated the charge that Mrs. White claimed to have been shown in

Facsimile of Mrs. White's Letter

Battle Creek Mich. Aug 24/1874

Dear Bro Loughborough

I hereby testify in the fear of God that the charges of Miles Grant, of Mrs Burdick and others published in the crisis is not true. The statements in reference to my course in Forty four is false.

With my Brethren and sisters after the time passed in forty four I did believe no more sinners ^{could} be converted. But I never had a vision that no more sinners ^{could} be converted.

And am clear and free to state that no one has ever heard me say or has read from my pen statements which will justify them in the charges they have made against me ^{upon} this point.

It was on my first journey out that the great light ^{in regard to the sanctuary} of the sanctuary was opened before me and I was shown the open-

and shut door. We believed that the Lord was seen to come in the clouds of heaven, I was shown that there was a great door to be come in for those who had not had the light and rejected the light. Our brethren could not understand this with our faith in the ~~same~~ immediate appearing of Christ. Some accused me of saying my Lord delayeth his coming especially the point-see ones. I saw that in 44 God had ~~that~~ opened a door and no man could shut it and ~~opened~~ a door and no man could open it. Those who refused to reject the light which was brought to the world by the message of the second angel went into darkness and ~~but~~ then how great was that darkness.

I never have stated or written that the world was doomed or damned. I never have under any circumstances used this language to ^{any} and no matter ~~how~~ ^{however} ~~simple~~ ^{simple}. I have ever had messages of ^{refray} for those who used these harsh expressions.

(This letter, written by Mrs. E. G. White to Elder J. N. Loughborough, August 24, 1874, has been photographed under my supervision by the Pacific Press Publishing Association.)

November 17, 1931

G. H. Jones,
Manager.

vision that there was no salvation for sinners after 1844.

In this letter to Brother Loughborough Mrs. White freely admits that with her brethren and sisters she believed that no more sinners would be saved after 1844. On the other hand, she makes the positive and fearless denial that she ever "had a vision that no more sinners would be converted." And she states that "no one has ever heard me say or has read from my pen statements which will justify them in the charges they have made against me upon this point."

This clear statement, made by herself, is precisely the conclusion I had reached after a very careful study of all her published statements from 1844 to 1852. I accept this statement at one hundred per cent for all that it is intended to convey. I must conclude that she knew better than any one else what was revealed to her. Furthermore, I must in all fairness allow her to testify for herself. Her letter, written in 1874, agrees with the views, teaching, and experiences of the pioneers of this movement from 1844 to 1852 as recorded in the publications that have been preserved.

This very plain and definite statement from Mrs. E. G. White ought

to settle the question once for all as to what she taught relative to the close of probation for sinners after the year 1844.

EDITORIAL NOTE.—A further elucidation of Brother Daniells' statement as to the faith of the pioneers may be of interest in this connection.

Previous to the disappointment in 1844, all engaged in that great religious movement believed that on the tenth day of the seventh month Christ would close His priestly ministry, and consequently the period of probation would come to an end for every individual, that the children of God were sealed to all eternity, and the impenitent were finally rejected. Further, that in the weeks and perhaps several months immediately following the disappointment, those who had been in the 1844 movement still believed that Christ had finished His work and that probation had closed. This included many who afterward became Seventh-day Adventists. Of course there were a large number who, upon the passing of the time, at once abandoned their faith and went into the world. But those who maintained their faith in their previous experience still held for a little time that probation was closed.

After prolonged and earnest study of the Bible, the pioneers in this movement saw the meaning of the close of Christ's ministry in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. They saw that in 1844 the door into that apartment was closed, but that another door was opened into the most holy place, where Christ en-

tered to continue His priestly ministry, as typified in the earthly sanctuary service.

They recognized that the door of mercy was still open to believers and truth seekers. But they felt that those who had rejected the message of truth in the 1844 movement were left without an Advocate; they had stubbornly rejected saving light, and consequently were left without an Intercessor. The classes of individuals still regarded as subjects of divine grace were as follows:

1. Erring brethren, believers who had been in the former movement.
2. Children who had not come to the age of accountability.
3. An indefinite class, represented by the seven thousand in the days of Elijah who had not bowed the knee to Baal. These would include even some from the world who had made no open or public confession of Christianity or of conversion, but who had feared and revered God according to the best light they had. God would recognize their honesty of heart, and bring them to a saving knowledge of the gospel of Christ.

The pioneers evidently held to this belief with gradually broadening vision for a period of several years. Little by little they came to recognize that the message with which they had been intrusted was world-wide in its application, that they were no longer to confine their efforts in behalf of those who had been in the preceding message, who had had a part in the 1844 movement, but that they were to prophesy again before many nations, peoples, tongues, and kings, and were to carry the threefold message of Revelation 14 to all nations of men.

The Logic of Their Experience

But this faith was not so narrow and exclusive as some would seek to make it appear. The erring brethren, the innocent children, those who had not worshiped Baal, including the honest-hearted who had never made a profession, embraced a large multitude from whom the pioneers believed God was to make up the number to be translated at His coming. And it should be remembered in this connection that they still believed Christ was to appear soon, within a few years at most. No wonder they felt that the scoffing, jeering multitude had so finally rejected Christ's intercession that His ministry no longer availed in their behalf. It was the very logic of their experience. It would be unreasonable to expect them to believe otherwise.

And is it surprising in any sense that the pioneers passed through this experience? Was not the growth in their religious faith a truly natural one? Light did not come to them in a day. They were not able to comprehend it, any more than were the disciples in Christ's day able to bear all that He desired to reveal to them. Little by little this light shone upon their

pathway; and as their vision enlarged and as the light grew brighter, they walked in its advancing rays.

And what more could be required of them? They proved their love of truth and their loyalty to God by obeying Him even when that obedience required their espousal of an unpopular cause. Out of the consequent confusion following their disappointment, they set their faces to seek the light, and God honored their purpose and revealed the light of truth to them. Slowly, but steadily, step by step, they traveled, ever onward and upward, with no backward turns or retrogressions, to their ultimate purpose, the giving of the everlasting gospel to the world.

The pioneers in this movement never claimed infallibility, nor do we claim it for them. We do, however, believe in the sincerity of heart and honesty of purpose which actuated their lives. Instead of censuring them for their limitation of vision and their lack of understanding divine revelation, we honor them for their loyalty to the truth as they saw it, for their honesty of heart in renouncing error as it was revealed to them, and for their lives of labor and sacrifice in the promulgation of the cause they espoused.

*Calendar Reform**

By C. S. LONGACRE

MR. PRESIDENT, DELEGATES, AND FRIENDS:

The International Religious Liberty Association, with headquarters in Washington, D. C., U. S. A., of which I am the general secretary, is composed of about 250,000 members, and practically all religious denominations are represented in its regular and associate membership. This association stands in defense of the rights of all men, irrespective of what their religious faith may be, or whether they make any profession of religion or not. Whenever men propose to interfere with the free exercise of conscience in religious matters, our association interposes a vigorous protest.

I want you to understand at the outset that the International Religious Liberty Association is not opposed to calendar reform, if the present calendar can be improved; nor is our association opposed to the fixing of Easter, if it is in the jurisdiction of the League of Nations to settle religious questions. Our association, however, is strongly opposed to a thirteen or twelve month calendar with blank days, which destroy the unbroken succession of the weekly cycle and alter the fixed religious days of the week. Such an arrangement interferes with the free exercise of religion, and destroys the sequence of the Sabbath days.

As a protest against the proposed twelve and thirteen months calendar

plans with their blank days, I have the honor of presenting to this International Conference on Calendar Revision more than 500,000 signatures personally signed to petitions opposing the breaking up of the seven-day weekly cycle. These petitions are on exhibition in the anteroom to the right at the entrance of this building, thousands of others are in the files of the League of Nations, and many thousands more are on their way to this conference. We launched the campaign for petitions of protest only a few weeks ago, and if we had had a month or two more in which to work, our membership would have turned in millions of protests in place of thousands. Two hundred thirty thousand signatures come from adult citizens of the United States, protesting against the adoption of a calendar which will disrupt the fixity of the historical and Biblical seven-day weekly cycle and the unbroken succession of the fixed religious days, which are sacredly cherished and observed by conscientious Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans.

High Per Cent Sign Petitions

Some of the petitions listed in these protests contain the signatures of 85 to 95 per cent of the business men of certain towns. Other petitions contain the signatures of 85 to 95 per cent of all the adult citizens of other towns. Thorough canvasses were made of these towns relative to this blank-day calendar issue, and these petitions give a cross-section result which affords a fair criterion of what a nationwide canvass would have been if a

similarly thorough canvass had been possible of the business men and adult citizens of every city, town, and hamlet in the United States. We are justified in concluding from these cross-section canvasses that 85 to 95 per cent of the people generally are opposed to a blank-day, year-day, or leap-day calendar plan.

These petitions of protest come from all parts of the world,—13,000 signatures from England, 30,000 from the British West Indies, 24,000 from India, 40,000 from South Africa, 144,000 from Germany, Holland, and the Balkan States, 19,000 from the Philippines, 3,000 from Canada, 3,000 from Sweden, 2,000 from the Baltic States. Twelve thousand were sent to me at Geneva, and many thousands have been forwarded directly to the League of Nations from many countries.

The National Calendar Committee of the United States, in response to a questionnaire, obtained a favorable reply for the adoption by the government of the blank-day calendar plan from ninety-two business firms out of 140 which are now using the thirteen-period year in their own businesses. From reading the published replies of these business men, we concluded that they had not clearly understood the questionnaire which was submitted to them by the National Calendar Committee of the United States.

The International Religious Liberty Association decided to test this matter by submitting another questionnaire to those business firms which had answered in favor of the blank-day calendar plan. We clearly set before them what was involved in the blank-day plan, so they could not possibly misunderstand the scheme, and to our own surprise, 60 per cent of the firms which replied to our questionnaire reversed the position they were reported to have taken on the National Calendar Committee's questionnaire. This test clearly demonstrated that these business men did not favor breaking the weekly cycle nor altering the sacred days of the week as handed down from the beginning. The thirteen-month year had their approval, but the blank day was disapproved by 60 per cent of these firms now using the thirteen-month calendar in their businesses.

List of Opposition to Blank Day

Gentlemen, it has been stated that only a small minority of religionists are opposed to the blank day in calendar revision. Permit me to present to you a summary of the opposition from both business and religious organizations to the adoption of the blank day.

As a result of a questionnaire submitted to 2,777 leading business or-

* The address of the secretary of the International Religious Liberty Association opposing the blank-day calendar before the League of Nations Conference.